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DDA Memo, 4/1/54

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Date: 220378 By: 025

MAY 4 1954

TO: Acting Deputy Director (Administration)

SUBJECT: Microfilm Program of the Office of Collection and Dissemination

REFERENCE: Staff Study dated October 15, 1953, above subject, to the Acting DD/A from the Management Staff

## 1. PROBLEM:

To report progress in the conversion of OOD reference files of incoming and CIA-produced intelligence documents to microfilm, the reproduction of prints therefrom to fulfill reference requirements, and provision of a film copy to Vital Materials Repository.

## 2. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM:

The microfilm program began 25 January 1954. This report covers progress made to 16 April, a period of 12 weeks.

a. Microfilming

Approximately 60% of the total incoming and CIA-produced documents are being photographed, film developed and mounted in aperture cards. Single-copy documents and enclosures from all sources were incorporated in the system on 25 January, State documents (including FGA and USIA) on 17 March, and Air Force documents on 12 April. Air Force will be furnished a film copy of their documents per the original agreement but the proposal to furnish them five prints has been dropped.

A temporary committee is screening documents at the intake point to delete those inappropriate for microfilming and is establishing standards for future screening by Document Branch.

There is no backlog of documents awaiting filming and none is anticipated.

b. Reference Service

- (1) From Microfilm Program Collection -- The collection is not being publicized during the pilot test. Despite this, requests for prints of documents are increasing daily. No backlog of requests exists to date. Reaction to the quality of service and print on the 2615 pages released to requesters to date has been very favorable.

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- (2) From Library 35mm. "C" Collection -- This collection of basic information is film copy by subscription, plus film copies of CIA documents with single copy enclosures and inter-Library loans which preceded the 16mm. microfilm program. Only urgent requirements for prints are filled because processing time for one print is approximately an hour with present facilities. Requests for printed documents from the file average 11,000 per month.

As soon as at least one additional photostat printer-processor is received, the Library will take over the aperture card files and start producing prints in response to reference requests.

c. Personal Services

Of the 19 personnel required for 100% operation (13 in Microfilm Branch, 6 in Library), 10 are on duty in the Microfilm Branch of whom 6 are on detail from other positions in OCD until results of the pilot test can be evaluated. The Library has relieved five persons to date for training in the new system through simplified filing techniques due to availability of microfilm files.

d. Equipment

All authorized equipment has been purchased except one photostat printer-processor. In addition, request for the purchase of one modified photostat printer-processor in excess of the authorization is under consideration by the Logistics Office. Modifications requested would provide for production of prints from 35mm. and 16mm. film and would increase the cost to approximately \$5,000. Maximum capacity of the one printer in use is about 30 % less than the original estimate of 15 prints per minute.

e. Storage Space

Simplified filing of printed documents during interim period will save approximately 90 cabinets, and it is estimated that within 6 months after 100% operation of the new system printed copy in the Library of filmed material can be eliminated.

f. Vital Materials Repository

Positive film of all documents microfilmed are identified by document control numbers and sent regularly to Vital Materials Repository.

3. DISCUSSION:

a. Microfilming

Progress in conversion to microfilm is proceeding more rapidly than anticipated. The 60% of intake being filmed represents the most difficult to photograph. Single-copy documents and enclosures (10% of total intake)

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average 10 pages per document so that in terms of camera load these documents represent approximately 24% of total intake. Thus, approximately 74% of total microfilming load has been absorbed.

Problems encountered in handling this difficult load and simultaneously training camera operators are numerous and must be solved before absorbing additional documents. This factor plus the approaching vacation period may delay 100% microfilming until September 1954.

b. Reference Service

Inferences to be drawn from recent reference requests are that the demand for prints will considerably exceed the original estimate. Reference files will increase due to negotiations now underway to borrow for 24-hour periods single-copy documents which are not presently available from other IAC agencies. Another factor for consideration is the increasing difficulty encountered in inter-Library loans due to cutbacks in other Agencies.

c. Personal Services

It is too early in the operation to make further predictions regarding personnel requirements. The period of simultaneous operation of the two systems presents some personnel problems but seems to be well in hand. Personnel savings should be realized gradually as Library files of microfilm develop.

d. Equipment

The request for purchase of a modified photostat printer-processor in excess of the original authorization is considered to be justified to handle 35mm. film in the Library "C" collection, 35mm. enclosures, and to offset the 30% less than estimated productivity of the two authorized machines.

4. CONCLUSIONS:

The reference potentials of the new system cannot be accurately evaluated until the Library has acquired sufficient files of microfilmed documents to provide "on the spot" reproduction of prints of items of current interest. Its successful operation should greatly expand the intake of timely basic reference materials, thereby improving the quality of intelligence production.

Other intelligence agencies have demonstrated keen interest in the development of this system and are contemplating similar operations.

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5. RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that favorable consideration be given to the purchase, in excess of original authorization, of one photostat printer-processor modified to handle 35 mm. and 16 mm. film, when you receive the requisition from Logistics Office within the next few days.

SIGNED

  
Chief, Management Staff

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CONCURRENCES:

25X1A9a (S) , 30 April 1954  
Assistant to DD/I (Administration)

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(S)  AD/CD, 3 May 1954  
Office of Collection and Dissemination

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